

Region Three Citizens' Advisory Committee
FWP Headquarters – Bozeman
September 12, 2013

CAC Attendees: Leroy Mehring, Cyndy Andres, Joe Cohenour, Rick Arnold, Dan Crismore, Rick Grady, Mike Dailey, Tom Helm, Katie Weaver, Bill Mealer, David Gibson

CAC Absent:

FWP Staff Present: Andrea Jones, Pat Flowers, Christine Marozick, Jerry Walker, Arnold Dood, Julie Cunningham, Travis Horton

Guests: Laura Lundquist (Bozeman Chronicle), Bonnie Rice (Sierra Club), Christine Wilcox (research scientist –Research and Development Council), Faith Moldan (Madisonian in Ennis), Glenn Hockett, Ward Olson, Jim Johnson

Greetings, introductions, roundtable and public comment – Pat Flowers

Rick Arnold: Concern about level of Upper Madison River and conflicts it caused between waders and boaters

Cyndy Andres: Recently elected to a committee to look at water basins across Montana. Headed up by DRNC.

Leroy Mehring: Concerns about Delmo Lake outside Butte. This year it has been drained and would like FWP to look at bringing back that fishery next year.

David Gibson: Would like to discuss all the different hunts, i.e. – damage, late season, how seasons are set, moose poaching, wolverine status

Bill Mealer: Interested in wolverine status, trapping for wolverines and wolves, issue this spring with Bill Hoppe bringing in domestic sheep. Should we be thinking about laws regarding wanton behavior?

Mike Dailey: Success story with School of Mines and water testing in Livingston area. Hired by state to go county to county to test water conditions and levels. Strongly suggest giving them a lot of support.

Katie Weaver: Now living in Livingston working in economic and community development. Will have a new interest in bison issues in Park County.

Roundtable:

Pat Flowers:

Updates since last meeting: adopted wolf season dates for this year (*summary of dates and changes to regulations*)

Andrea Jones: Held three wolf trapping certification classes. Had much less interest this year than last. Will be a pet release class on October 2nd for non-trapping public.

Pat Flowers: Were approached last winter by a group of concerned citizens about incidental trappings. We adopted a setback of 500 feet on either side of trails that get heavy use in the winter.

More updates since last meeting.

- Petition to change wake provisions on Harrison Lake. We recommended the petition be denied, and commission upheld that.
- This year's bison quota was adopted. Went up 6 since last year to 50.
- Just about to go into biennial season setting process. Due by mid October. Will adopt tentative at December commission meeting. Then we take comments at public meetings through January.
 - If you have comments now, please send them to me.

Grizzly Bear Management, *Kevin Frey*

- Status of Management Plan for southwest Montana
- Description of day-to-day conflict/nuisance management
- Video presentation: "Yellowstone Grizzly Bears, a Success Story"

Bighorn Sheep Proposal –Madison County, *Julie Cunningham*

Year-round Bison Habitat EA Update, *Pat Flowers*

- Proposal is online. You may comment on it there. (*Gave brief summary of proposal.*)
- To date, we have received 49,000 comments.
- This is an exciting opportunity to manage wild bison on Montana's landscape. We don't think it would be an overwhelming number to manage.
- There are 5 alternatives to this plan, including "no action."
- Joint EA between myself and Board of Livestock.

Bill Mealer: How will this decision be made? *Who* makes the decision?

Pat Flowers: It's me and the Board of Livestock. We have two joint decision makers. Me, representing FWP, and the Board of Livestock as one entity.

Mike Dailey: What happens during breeding season?

Pat Flowers: I assume there will be some movement back into the park. We don't really know where they'll end up.

Hunter Education Program in southwest Montana, *Andrea Jones*

Pat Flowers: Regarding firearms in schools for purposes of hunter ed, this would be another media opportunity for hunter ed.

Hunters Against Hunger

Pat Flowers: Bill introduced and passed in last legislature. So far we have collected almost \$4,000 since July 1st. ALX has only been prompting the question for about 2-3 weeks.

Cyndy Andrus: How is money distributed?

Pat Flowers: Those details have yet to be worked out.

Rick Grady: Kids are proud to have completed Hunter Ed. Have you thought about partnering with Cabela's since they moved into the state?

Enforcement Update, *Sam Sheppard*

Sam Sheppard: Will be wrapping up a case in the next couple weeks that has been going on for several years involving a wealthy ranch owner who has been giving out "ranch tags" and laying waste to a lot of game. Last count was \$69,000 in restitution.

Just had our R3 trophy auction. Over \$42,000 was raised and put back into the general fund. Highest item was a bighorn sheep from Wildhorse Island that was struck by lightning. It sold for over \$3,200. Another high selling item was a trophy deer rack that was poached and bought back by the poacher for over \$2,500.

R3 had three times as many items confiscated than any other region.

Chad Murphy (investigator) is receiving the Governor's Excellence Award. Only two are given in the department.

Also dealing with lots of bear sightings this time of year, and working on multiple sightings of a possible mountain lion near an elementary school. We looked at some photos, and determined the animal in the photo to be a house cat.

Have written about 40 written warnings to people who pass AIS check stations, and gave just as many verbal warnings. Since this is a new program, eventually we may end up writing tickets to any boater who passes without stopping.

Anyone interested in getting on a CAC for AIS should contact Linnea Schroeder.

Also working on a moose poaching case up in Hyalite. We posted images on social media, and within the first 4 hours, we received 1,000 posts.

Rick Arnold: Concerns about boaters putting in at Reynold's Bridge and fishing illegally.

Sam Sheppard: We've responded to a lot of those calls over the years and mostly it's reports by people thinking boaters are fishing and they are not.

Fisheries: Impact of drought (restrictions/closures, angling), *Travis Horton*

Travis Horton:

- Have had a lot of water issues this season. Flow and temperature criteria. *Review of this year's closures.*

- Madison definitely had some trouble this year. Good winter flows, then early spring runoff, then PPL panicked when early summer runoff didn't fill the reservoir, and lowered the flow. Had some die off of rainbows, nymphs, still haven't seen temperatures below 70 degrees below the dam.
- PPL's concerns were warranted, and by October 1st, we will probably be right at the lowest level we can.
- Starting to lift fishing closures. *Summary of restrictions lifted.*
- Overall, year was hard, but I expected to see a lot more fish kill than we did. We owe thanks to irrigators for cooperating.
- Regarding Leroy's question on Delmo Lake. It was initially a public irrigation reservoir. We approached them to create recreation opportunity. There is no minimum water level. It typically gets brought down pretty low. Construction had to let a lot of water out. There was a lot of fish killed, we netted about 800-1,000 fish and released them back into the water. It was a big shame, but we tried to do the best to keep the fish alive. Retrospect, we should have put some salvage rules in place.

Joe Cohenour: Fish die off in Holter and Hauser?

Travis Horton: It was carp, and I can't really speak as to why. Those fish have NO genetic diversity to withstand diseases.

Katie Weaver: What is the date an irrigator can pull water to?

Mike Dailey: Have to stop pulling water October 1st, generally.

CAC Caucus

Pat Flowers: Caucus was established years ago for you to talk amongst yourselves about any issues.

Joe Cohenour: Andrea – can you forward us the public releases so we can be aware?

Dan Crismore: You can get notifications on your phone if you can figure out how to do it.

Pat Flowers: We can put the CAC on the EA notifications list. Katie, Rick Grady, Cyndy do not want to be on it.

Rick Arnold: Can I have the name and address for state AIS coordinator? We need to have some coordination between FWP and Idaho fish and game to check boats at the border near Reynold's Pass that come back into Montana. Were low flows above Lyon's Bridge discussed by Madison River CAC?

Pat Flowers: It was never discussed. I'll talk with Travis and Cheryl. We'll put out a draft review on recreation on Upper Madison and will be open for public comment. That's about two months out and will be your chance to comment.

Tom Helm: Do we have some people whose terms are ending?

Andrea Jones: Cyndy, Rick, Barb, Bill, Leroy, Joe.

Joe Cohenour: I think we're all in our second term.

Rick Arnold: If possible, I'd like to volunteer again.

Bill Mealer: Wolverine? Let's add it to next meeting's agenda.

Public comment: None.

Meeting Adjourned.

2012 Calendar

March 29

June 20

September 12

December 5